



#### INFORMATION ON GREEN BURIAL

*Grave Matters* by Mark Harris: [www.gravematters.us](http://www.gravematters.us)

*Grave Expectations* by Carmen Flowers and Sue Bailey: [graveexpectations.net/](http://graveexpectations.net/)

**New England Green Burial Society:** [negbs.com/](http://negbs.com/)

**Natural Burial:**  
[naturalburial.coop/USA/category/operating/](http://naturalburial.coop/USA/category/operating/)

**Green Burial Council:** [www.greenburialcouncil.com/](http://www.greenburialcouncil.com/)

**The Centre for Natural Burial:**  
[www.naturalburial.coop/](http://www.naturalburial.coop/)

**Be a Tree: the Natural Burial Guide for Turning Yourself into a Forest:** [www.beatree.com/](http://www.beatree.com/)

Our Changing Funeral and Burial Practices:  
[steadyhabits.wordpress.com/2007/10/29/our-changing-funeral-and-burial-practices/](http://steadyhabits.wordpress.com/2007/10/29/our-changing-funeral-and-burial-practices/)

'Green' Burials Try To Preserve Cycle of Life:  
[www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/28/AR2007092801824.html?hpid=sec-religion](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/28/AR2007092801824.html?hpid=sec-religion)



## GREEN BURIAL

### HELP SAVE A DIFFERENT KIND OF GREEN

THE KIND FOUND IN PEOPLE'S WALLETS

Mark Harris, author of the book, *Grave Matters*, an examination of alternative methods of burial, said green cemeteries are becoming more popular in America because they are easier on the environment. "The modern cemetery is less a natural, bucolic resting ground for the dead than a landfill of largely toxic and mostly non-biodegradable materials," Harris said. "With green burials, the body decays quickly and naturally, allowing the body to rejoin the cycle of life regenerating its resources back into nature."

Green cemeteries also preserve land from future development and act as a powerful land conservation tool. "Once land is designated as a cemetery, it becomes very difficult to develop. If you want to save land from bulldozers, there's few better ways than turning it into a cemetery."

"Between charges for embalming, a metal casket, a vault, a headstone, the cemetery charges for a plot and the opening and closing of a grave, and the fee for perpetual care and maintenance of the grave site, funeral costs today can easily run \$10,000 or more," Harris said. "Green burials, in contrast, run in the low thousands of dollars, and can be less depending on personal choices. So the cost differential is huge." Saving on funeral costs is a significant factor in choosing a green burial ground.

### A STEP BACK TO NATURE

*From an article by John Richardson, Staff Writer, Portland Press Herald*

*After a lifetime of recycling, composting, turning down the thermostat and trying to eat local organic food, some people might not want to leave their bodies to be filled with a chemical preservative and buried in steel and concrete, or even cremated in a gas-fired furnace. Now they have a couple more options. . .*

*A standard plot at Cedar Brook costs \$800, but there are generally few other costs to a green burial. Bodies are buried in wooden coffins, shrouds or even a favorite quilt. The discount factor -- a standard funeral can cost 10 times as much -- is one reason the idea has gotten so much interest and attention in recent months.*

*McHugh created Cedar Brook Burial Ground, Inc. on about two acres of a 150-acre tree farm 25 miles west of Portland. He has put in granite dust pathways, planted chestnut trees and done some thinning, but the area remains a natural woodlot where customers can be buried beneath trees when the time comes.*

*Embalming, formaldehyde and steel caskets are relatively new to the funeral process. All funerals were essentially green until 150 years ago. Until recently, burial in a private family cemetery or cremation was the alternative. And those are still a preferred mode of departure for many who don't want a commercial burial, whether because of the cost or the environmental impacts. Some, but not all, in the funeral industry have dismissed the green funeral idea. And no doubt it's not for everyone.*

*"It's a trend, I think, that's time has come," McHugh said.*